

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2929

PRETORIA ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV PINT WA SF
SUBJ: NAMIBIA: CONVERSATION WITH SWAPO OFFICIALS

1. SUMMARY: CHARGE AND POLOFF RECENTLY HELD CONVERSATION WITH SWAPO VICE PRESIDENT MISHEK MUYONGO AND SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS PETER MUSHIHANGE. THE TWO OFFICIALS EVIDENCED CONTINUING DEEP DISTRUST OF SOUTH AFRICAN MOTIVATION AND PLANS REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTACT GROUP PROPOSALS ON NAMIBIA, JUDGED THAT THE RETURN OF SHIPANGA WOULD HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON NAMIBIA POLITICS, DENIED THE PRESENCE OF ANY SWAPO DETAINEES IN ZAMBIA, AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT A SWAPO-RULED NAMIBIA WOULD HAVE TO MAINTAIN A WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH
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SOUTH AFRICA. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING RECENT CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE AND POLOFF, SENIOR SWAPO OFFICIALS MADE CLEAR THEIR CONTINUED DEEP SUSPICION OF SOUTH AFRICAN PLANS AND MOTIVATION IN REGARD TO POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTACT GROUP PROPOSALS ON NAMIBIA. BOTH VICE PRESIDENT MISHEK MUYONGO AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SECRETARY PETER MUSHIHANGE SAID SWAPO HAD INFORMATION THAT SOUTH AFRICA PLANNED TO ATTACK SWAPO BASES IN ZAMBIA. EVEN IF THIS DID NOT HAPPEN, THEY EXPRESSED DOUBTS THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT REALLY INTENDED TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH ITS ACCEPTANCE OF THE WESTERN PLAN, AND SUGGESTED, RATHER, THAT SOUTH AFRICA ULTIMATELY PLANNED TO PURSUE ITS OWN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. MUSHIHANGE SAID THAT THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF THE MAJORITY OF THE INTERNAL LEADERSHIP WAS PROOF THAT THE SAG WAS NOT SINCERE. MUYONGO SAID HE FEARED THAT THE SAG ONLY WANTED TO GET ALL THE EXTERNAL SWAPO LEADERSHIP BACK INSIDE THE COUNTRY SO THEY COULD BE KILLED OR ARRESTED. FOR THIS REASON, HE SAID, SWAPO WOULD KEEP SOME OF ITS FORCES OUTSIDE NAMIBIA UNTIL IT WAS ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT THE UN WAS IN COMPLETE CONTROL.

3. THE TWO OFFICIALS SAID THEY WERE NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE RETURN TO NAMIBIA OF SWAPO DISSIDENT ANDREAS SHIPANGA. THEY SAID THEY WERE CONVINCED HE HAD LITTLE FOLLOWING IN THE TERRITORY AND WOULD HAVE ONLY MINIMAL EFFECT ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION. WHEN ASKED IF THERE WAS ANY CHANCE OF SHIPANGA RETURNING TO THE SWAPO FOLD, MUSHIHANGE NOTED THAT HE HAD BEEN EXPELLED FROM SWAPO TWICE AND THIS TIME WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED BACK. MUYONGO SAID THAT REPORTS FROM NAMIBIA HAD INDICATED THAT THE ABRAHAMS WERE HAVING NO SUCCESS IN GETTING SUPPORT FOR THE "SO-CALLED SWAPO-DEMOCRATS." DESCRIBING HER AS A DEVIOUS POLITICAL SCHEMER, MUYONGO SAID THAT OTTILIE ABRAHAMS

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HAD ALWAYS BEEN A TROUBLE-MAKER FOR SWAPO.

4. COMMENTING ON CHARGES BY SHIPANGA AND THE SAG THAT SWAPO WAS HOLDING DISSIDENTS IN ZAMBIA, THE SWAPO VICE PRESIDENT SAID THAT THE ORGANIZATION'S CAMPS IN ZAMBIA WERE OPEN TO INSPECTION BY NEUTRAL OBSERVERS FROM THE UN. HE NOTED THAT OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS HE HAD BROUGHT A NUMBER OF OUTSIDERS TO NYANGO, AND FROM THAT IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT NO ONE IS BEING HELD AGAINST HIS WILL. WHILE VISITS TO THE SWAPO CAMPS WOULD HAVE TO BE CLEARED BY THE ZAMBIAN AUTHORITIES, MUYONGO SAID THAT SWAPO WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO A LEGITIMATE INVESTIGATION.

5. BOTH MUSHIHANGE AND MUYONGO STATED THAT A SWAPO-RULED NAMIBIA WOULD HAVE TO DEVELOP A WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA. THEY NOTED THAT ECONOMIC TIES WERE SO CLOSE THAT IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT THAT THOSE TIES COULD BE SEVERED FOR AT LEAST SEVERAL YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE. WHILE NEGOTIATIONS OVER WALVIS BAY WOULD HAVE A DECISIVE IMPACT ON NAMIBIA-SOUTH AFRICAN RELATIONS, IF THAT PROBLEM WERE SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVED, OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS COULD BE ARRANGED IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

6. COMMENT: SWAPO SUSPICION OF SOUTH AFRICA RUNS DEEP AND IS NOT LIKELY TO BE TEMPERED UNTIL THE UN PRESENCE IN NAMIBIA IS PERVASIVE. MUYONGO AND MISHIHANGE IMPLIED THAT SOME OF SWAPO MILITARY ELEMENTS WOULD REMAIN OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY UNTIL THE DEPARTURE OF ALL SOUTH AFRICA FORCES, INCLUDING THE RESIDUAL 1500. THE SWAPO OFFICIALS' DISMISSAL OF SHIPANGA WAS NOT CONVINCING AND THERE IS OBVIOUSLY SOME CONCERN ABOUT HIS ACTIVITIES, ESPECIALLY WHILE THE SWAPO INTERNAL ORGANIZATION REMAINS HAM-STRUNG BY THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF THE MAJORITY OF ITS LEADERSHIP. AS FOR ALLEGATIONS OF SWAPO DISSIDENTS BEING HELD IN ZAMBIA, NEITHER OFFICIAL HESITATED TO SAY THE CAMPS COULD BE VISITED BY NEUTRAL OBSERVERS, BUT BOTH MENTIONED ONLY NYANGO AND MAHEBA, WHILE AVOIDING SENANGA, WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE INCLUDED IN ANY INSPECTIONS.
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